

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OAK LAWN PARK DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON APRIL 9, 2007**

The Board of Commissioners of the Oak Lawn Park District was convened in a Regular Meeting on April 9, 2007 at 7:38 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Andersen, Callahan, Vorderer, Wallace and McCauley

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Regular Meeting of March 12, 2007

Callahan moved, Vorderer seconded, to approve.

Voting: Aye: Callahan, Vorderer, Wallace, McCauley – Abstain: Andersen

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD/CORRESPONDENCE:

A. Volunteers of the Month, Michael and Jennie Loftus, Honored

McCauley recognized Michael and Jennie Loftus, who volunteer in Special Recreation. They assist the Young Adult Club on a weekly basis, and their commitment as a couple shines in their work with others.

B. Special Olympic Winter Games Team Congratulated

McCauley congratulated and presented awards to this team of snowshoers, cross-country skiers, and our first Alpine skier for winning five gold medals and three silver medals at the Special Olympic Winter Games. The Park District is proud of their accomplishments.

C. Special Recreation Eagles Basketball Team Congratulated

McCauley congratulated the Eagles Team on winning first place at the Special Olympics basketball tournament and presented members with certificates of athletic achievement. She also acknowledged their participation at the ITRS tournament. The Park District is honored to recognize these athletes.

D. Jim Pacetti re Soccer Program

Mr. Pacetti of 4633 West 98th Place is a lifelong resident of Oak Lawn. He announced that the Police and Fire Charity Hockey event raised more than \$4,200, which will be split equally between Ronald McDonald House and Oak Lawn Children's Museum.

Mr. Pacetti has been involved with Oak Lawn indoor and outdoor soccer for many years. He asked for program improvements. He discussed soccer with 10-11 year olds. In the summer, his roster was first available August 24, while other teams had the advantage of practicing four weeks earlier. He believes the League should be using certified referees. Other rules regarding player participation need to be followed. He wanted to attend the League's year-end wrap up meeting, but was not invited. The winter soccer team had a four-week gap between practices because other Pavilion events shut down soccer. Furthermore, the teams were not divided equally by age, and other teams were running up scores by overtime goals.

Mr. Pacetti asked that rosters be available on time, rules be enforced and asked about a permanent soccer field. He urged that the programs need consistency. He wants to improve soccer and offered his help. He believes the players are talented and wants to provide them with better opportunities for advancement this fall.

Director Kelly thanked Mr. Pacetti for his comments and concerns and stated that the Park District's sportsmanship philosophies are aligned with his goals. She urged him to join the Athletic Advisory Board, and he agreed. Staff will review and answer his concerns.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Dog Park Presentation by Gary Major, Director of Worth Park District

Mr. Major and Kelly had discussed a joint dog park. He distributed a preliminary presentation and indicated that the Worth Park District has a great interest in joint development of this project. Worth would

provide 1-1/2 to 2 acres of land at Homerding Park, 115th and Oak Park Avenue. The land is leased from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, and its approval would be needed. A sled hill and playground is on the property, with plans to add a baseball field. Oak Lawn would provide financial contributions and receive resident rates.

Mr. Major stated that the Worth Park Board is ready to move forward, but four of five board members will be newly elected this month. He does not foresee any issues over this project.

Preliminary fencing estimates are \$15,000. There could be two areas for small and large breed dogs, a drinking fountain, dog showers, benches, i.d. display stations and information board. He believes there is ample parking. He discussed whether a landscape architect is needed. Worth Park District would assume maintenance issues.

Wallace stated that many Oak Lawn residents use the Oak Brook dog park. She discussed its simplicity and asked for a similar plan, noting that landscape architect fees can make the cost to build overly expensive.

Andersen stated that this proposal is exactly along the lines that the Board has been discussing to collaborate with another community. He is in favor of pursuing it to completion. He too would like to start with a simple park that both Oak Lawn and Worth residents can access, which can be later evaluated for improvements. He thanked Directors Kelly and Major for their efforts.

Vorderer concurred that the Park District is committed to a dog park and allocated \$30,000 to a partnership. He reviewed efforts to partner with Burbank, but costs became too high.

McCauley stated that the Park Districts would develop the park, and patron fees would continue to keep it operational. She thanked Mr. Major for his efforts and Kelly for initiating discussions. Our Board will review this plan while Mr. Major confirms support with the new Worth Park District Board. He will return to Oak Lawn with a concrete plan.

FINANCE REPORT:

Andersen moved, Callahan seconded to approve payables of \$1,259,371.90 for the period of March 12, 2007 to April 9, 2007.

Voting: Aye: All – Nay: None.

CONSENT AGENDA:

A. Request to Place Budget on Display

Andersen moved, Callahan seconded to place the budget on display. Under discussion, Wallace requested to table the vote until next month to give the Board more time to review the budget. Wallace suggested one or two more finance meetings before the budget is displayed. Kelly stated that changes can be made to the budget while it is on display. Schmaedeke said the budget needs to be adopted by July 31, and he distributed a budget summary to the Board. At this time, operating funds reflect a profit of \$82,742, non-operating funds reflect a profit of \$231,966, for a total profit of \$314,708.

The Board voted to place the budget on display.

Voting: Aye: Callahan, Andersen, Vorderer and McCauley – Nay: Wallace

LEGAL: None

APPROVAL OF BIDS OVER \$10,000:

Golf Balls

Vorderer moved, Andersen seconded to purchase golf balls for the driving range, per staff recommendation from the lowest bidder, Callaway Golf Company, for \$11,850.

Voting: Aye: All – Nay: None.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

McCauley wished Board and staff members a Happy Easter and Spring. The spring programs have started; and even with cold weather, more people have begun using the parks.

MATTERS OF THE DIRECTOR:

Kelly stated that in two weeks the Board will be in Springfield to meet with legislators, but McCauley will be absent because she is receiving the Professor of the Year Award at Moraine Valley Community College. She congratulated McCauley on this honor. McCauley is sorry she cannot be in Springfield as the dates conflict, but knows her fellow Board members will represent the Park District very well.

Presentation by Dolly Foster, OLPD Horticulturist

Kelly enthusiastically introduced Dolly Foster, a horticulturist hired this year to beautify Park properties. Foster thanked the Board for creating the horticulturist position and presented her report of landscape renovations to make the Park District more colorful, inviting and serene. She noted that it will take a few years for plants to establish, and by the third year, the grounds should look fabulous.

2007 projects include:

- Renovating the landscape by the Administration building, and installing a patio and bench by the pool entrance.
- Planting in the Pavilion parking lot, containers and woodland area, to be completed before July 4th festivities.
- Updating the front landscape of Centennial Pool.
- Updating the Ice Arena plantings at the entrance.
- Reviving the adopt-a-flowerbed program. All areas will be adopted. We will provide a water truck for volunteers to use, to reduce their workload.
- Reviving green house groupies. Eight volunteers, most are master gardeners, are helping to prepare plants now. The greenhouse will become an integral part of our horticultural program, and we will expand efforts to save plants over the winter. Thousands of plants are in the greenhouse now.

2008 goals include landscaping renovations at Oak View Center, additional work at the Pavilion and Centennial Pool, and Johnston and Menard Centers. Rain gardens will be installed to conserve water at the base of downspouts. Future plans include propagating more plants, landscaping the Little White Building, planting at Phillips Park, adding display gardens in the parks, and getting the community more involved.

Renovating many areas with native plants will cut down on maintenance after the first or second year. Most plants are drought tolerant. Callahan asked Foster to consider installing low-voltage plant lighting in the Pavilion parking lot. McCauley thanked Foster for designing these landscape plans.

MATTERS OF THE COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioners congratulated McCauley on her continued success in receiving the Professor of the Year award. It is a great honor and reflects highly upon her and the Board.

Wallace thanked Kelly for pursuing the Worth Park District dog park concept and expressed enthusiasm for Foster's landscape plans. Vorderer thanked Kelly for proposing the idea of a horticulturist position. Landscaping is a form of artwork in our parks, and it will make the parks a better place to be.

Andersen and fellow Commissioners received an invitation to join Oak Lawn Baseball's Opening Day parade and ceremonies on April 29. Also, the Oak Lawn Library is having a program in observance of the 40th anniversary of the tornado. Residents that day remember the horrific devastation it caused our community. The Library is opening a local history room on April 21, and all are invited to attend. He asked Foster to consider installing memorial brick walkways and patios in some of our planting areas.

Andersen first ran for public office 30 years ago. He acknowledged and thanked former Park Commissioner John Broderick who was in the audience. He noted that in the past 30 years, there have been many elections and candidates. There was a recent newspaper article about a candidate running for the Park Board who is attacking the District. The candidate claims the Park District lacks proper oversight of taxpayer assets and noted recent examples of missing funds and undocumented deals. Andersen said these statements are untrue and is offended by them.

Andersen stated that Commissioners have worked hard over the years to bring honor and dignity to the District. There are no recent examples of missing funds and no undocumented deals at the Ice Arena. He hopes the candidate will reevaluate his thoughts. He wished luck to all the candidates and hopes that whoever wins next week will serve the best interests of the Park District and citizens of Oak Lawn. It is not a self-serving position or an individual commission. It is a Board, and three votes are needed to pass any action. The quality of the Park District was being attacked in the article. As a member of the IAPD Board of Trustees, he believes Oak Lawn is one of the best districts in the State if not the country.

Callahan is enthusiastic to see the parks being used again as the weather gets warmer. He asked Foster to keep up her hard, ambitious work.

NEW BUSINESS:

Former Park Commissioner John Broderick offered two suggestions:

- Propose a referendum to residents to build an indoor pool at 102nd and Major. Residents of all ages, from children learning to swim, to adults and handicapped, would utilize the pool. It would be in a desirable location in the center of town and would capture votes of residents east of Southwest Highway. He believes the previous Pavilion pool referendum failed because of its west side location in a high traffic area.
- Build an indoor running track. There is no nearby year-round running track for students to practice and develop running skills. The track would also benefit adults. Schools using the track would pay user fees to help offset its costs.

Kelly advised that the Park District operates under tax caps and limited funding. Indoor pools take a tremendous amount of money to build and operate. Some swimmers use a recently built indoor pool at nearby Chicago Hayes Park. It is a great alternative for those seeking an indoor pool. Broderick suggested an arrangement with Chicago to advertise and utilize the pool.

EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE DISCUSSION OF PERSONNEL, REAL ESTATE AND LITIGATION:

Andersen moved, Callahan seconded to adjourn to Executive Session

Voting: Aye: All – Nay: None.

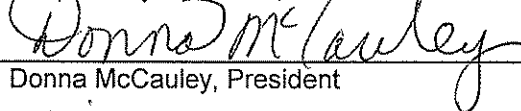
ADJOURN:

Vorderer moved, Callahan seconded to adjourn.

Voting: Aye: All – Nay: None.

Meeting ended at 9:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna McCauley, President



Cindy Pender, Recording Secretary

Cindy Pender, Recording Secretary